

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOSIA 2754

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PFOR CY TU

SUBJECT: NEW OPPOSITION PARTY OPPOSES CONCESSIONS

1. IN STATEMENT REPORTED SEPTEMBER 11 TURK CYPRIOT PRESS, ALPER ORHON, PRESIDENT OF FLEDGLING POPULAR PARTY (HALKCHI PARTISI), STRONGLY OPPOSED GRANTING OF ANY CONCESSIONS TO GREEKS, CRITICIZED DENKTASH'S SECRET DIPLOMACY", AND VOICED CONCERN THAT DENKTASH, FACED WITH MOUNTING INTERNATIONAL PRESSURES, MIGHT BE PUSHED INTO MAKING CONCESSIONS. "BOTH DENKTASH AND CLERIDES SHOULD KNOW", ORHON ASSERTED, "THAT TURK CYPRIOT COMMUNITY HAS NO CONCESSIONS TO GIVE."

2. POPULAR PARTY, WHICH STILL IN PROCESS OF ORGANIZING ITSELF IN BOTH ORGANIZATIONAL AND POLICY MATTERS, CLAIMS TO BE PARTY OF "DEMOCRATIC LEFT" AND DELIBERATELY TRYING TO PROJECT IMAGE OF PARTY LINKED TO ECEVIT AND MAINLAND REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY. ACCORDING ORHON, PARTY'S MAIN FOCUS WILL BE ON INTERNAL AND ECONOMIC ISSUES RATHER THAN FOREIGN AFFAIRS WHERE TURK CYPRIOTS OUT OF NECESSITY SHARE
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GENERALLY SIMILAR VIEWS. POPULAR PARTY PRESENTLY HOLDS SIX

SEATS IN CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY AND HAS ATTRACTED SUPPORT OF MANY YOUNG PEOPLE, ALIENATED MEMBERS OF DENKTASH CAMP, POLITICAL RETREADS AND SUPPORTERS OF FORMER VICE PRESIDENT KUCHUK, AND THOSE DISGRUNTLED WITH ECONOMIC SITUATION AND DENKTASH'S HANDLING OF ECONOMIC MATTERS.

3. COMMENT: A) ORHON IS A BRIGHT, PERSONALLY ATTRACTIVE FIGURE IN HIS MID-THIRTIES WITH A POLITICIAN'S FULL DOSE OF CYNICISM AND OPPORTUNISM. (FOR EXAMPLE, HE RECENTLY TOLD EMBOFF THAT THOUGH HE BELIEVED TURKS HAD TO GIVE MEANINGFUL CONCESSIONS, INCLUDING TERRITORY, HE WOULD AS A PARTY LEADER HAVE TO OPPOSE ANY CONCESSIONS.) BEFORE BEING BROUGHT TO CYPRUS AS MINISTER OF PLANNING AND COORDINATION FOLLOWING THE 1974 EVENTS -- A POST IN WHICH HE LASTED FOR ONLY A FEW MONTHS DUE TO HIS INCOMPATIBILITY WITH DENKTASH -- ORHON TAUGHT ECONOMICS AT ISTANBUL ECONOMICS FACULTY AND ADVISED (OR CLAIMS TO HAVE ADVISED) RPP ON CYPRUS MATTERS. B. ORHON SUFFERS FROM A RECOGNITION PROBLEM IN THE TURK CYPRIOT COMMUNITY AND IS WORKING HARD TO ESTABLISH PARTY BRANCHES IN TOWNS AND VILLAGES AND TO MAKE HIS NAME KNOWN. THUS, NEITHER HE NOR HIS PARTY CONSTITUTE SERIOUS POLITICAL THREAT TO DENKTASH AT PRESENT. HOWEVER, SHOULD THE ECONOMY REALLY BOG DOWN AND EFFORTS TO INTEGRATE REFUGEES FALTER, POSSIBILITY OF ORHON AND HIS PARTY MAKING IMPORTANT INROADS INTO DENKTASH'S POLITICAL FIEFDON CANNOT BE RULED OUT. C) WHILE ORHON'S STATEMENT REGARDING CONCESSIONS REGARDED AS POSTURING BY MANY OBSERVERS, SUCH PUBLIC PRONOUNCEMENTS FROM A POTENTIALLY SERIOUS RIVAL WILL NO DOUBT MAKE DENKTASH EVEN MORE CAUTIOUS IN ADDRESSING QUESTION OF TERRITORIAL "ADJUSTMENTS." END COMMENT.

4. FULLER ANALYSIS OF POPULAR PARTY, ITS RELATIONSHIP TO LEFTIST REPUBLICAN TURKISH PARTY, AND DENKTASH'S EFFORT TO FORM "NATIONAL UNITY PARTY" IN RESPONSE, TO BE COVERED IN SUBSEQUENT AIRGRAM.
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